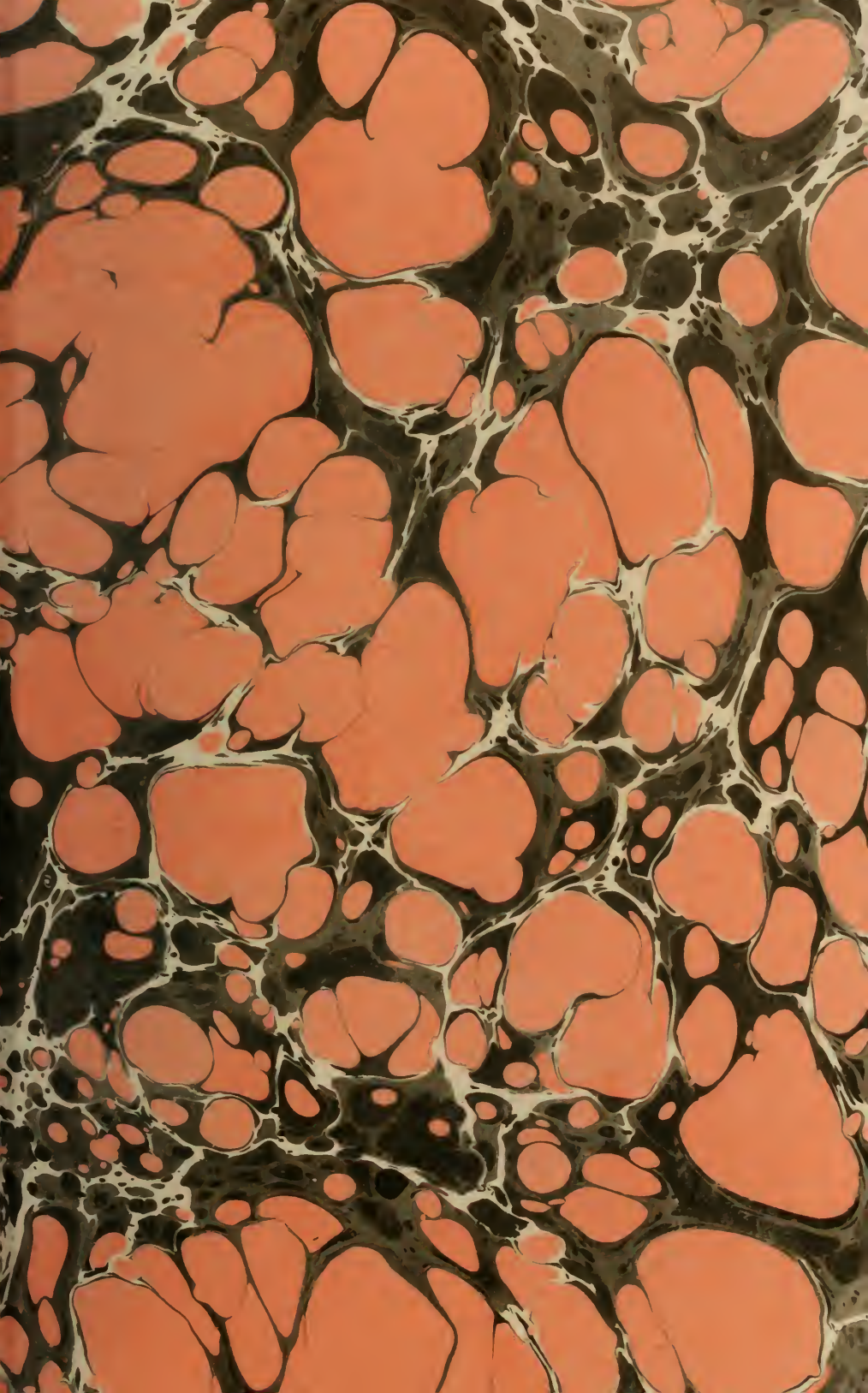

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THE

CHARACTER

OF AN

Independent *WHIG.*

Periculoſæ plenum opus aleæ
Tractas; & incedis per ignes,
Suppoſitos cineri doloſo.

Hor. Lib. II. Ode I.

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THE CHARACTER OF AN Independent *WHIG.*

INdependency at Court is a Hereſy in Politicks, never pardoned, *much leſs* countenanced *there*. Our *Whig*, therefore, adheres to his Principles, and has no Pretenſions to a Place. —*Caret invidenda ſobrius aula.* He ſcorns all implicite Faith in the State, as well as the Church. The Authority of Names is nothing to him; he judges all Men by their Actions and Behaviour, and hates a Knave of his own Party, as much as he deſpiſes a Fool of another. He conſents not that any Man, or Body of Men, ſhall do what they pleaſe. He claims a Right of examining all publick Meaſures, and, if they deſerve it, of cenſuring them. As he never ſaw much Power poſſeſſed without ſome Abuſe, he takes upon him to watch thoſe that have it; and to acquit or expoſe them, according as they apply it,

to the Good of their Country, or their own crooked Purpoſes.

As to Religion, our Whig is a Proteſtant; not becauſe he was born ſo, according to the canting Abſurdity in Vogue; or bred ſo, ſince in Infancy Religion is acquired like a Leſſon in Grammar, purely by the Help of Memory; and therefore Children learn it, whether it be good or bad, as they do Language, from their Nurſe, or their Parents. But he is a Proteſtant becauſe his Judgment and his Eyes inform him, that the Principles of that Faith are warranted by the Bible, and conſiſtent with our Civil Liberties; and he thinks every Syſtem which is not ſo, to be Forgery and Impoſture, however dignified or diſtinguiſhed.

In Conſequence of this, he has a great Reſpect for the Office of a Clergyman; and for his Perſon, if he deſerves it. But if his Doctrine or Practice diſgraces his Order, our Whig owns his Contempt for the Men. The Clergy are the beſt or the worſt of Men; and as the firſt cannot be too much honoured, the latter cannot be too much deſpiſed. It is of good Example, and there is equal Reaſon in it. Why ſhould Virtue and Villany fare alike? Names do not change Qualities, nor Habits Men. Where is the Equity of Rewards and Puniſhments, and conſequently the Force of all Laws, human and divine, if vile Men muſt be reverenced, and the good can be no more?

It is but reaſonable that all Men ſhould be judged by their Actions, and reverenced, or ſcorned, according to the Goodneſs or Wickedneſs of their Lives, without any Regard had to their Titles or Garbs; which ſignify no more than a Breath of Wind, or the Bark of a Tree.

There is not a greater Inſult upon the Underſtandings of Mankind, than for Prieſts to challenge Reſpect from their Habit, when they have forfeited it

it by their Behaviour. There is no Sanctity in Garments. A Roſe in a Man's Hat does not enlarge his Piety. Grace is not conveyed by a Piece of Lawn, or Chaſtity by the wearing of a Girdle. A black Gown has neither more Senſe, nor better Manners, than a black Cloak. Nor is a black Cloak more edifying than a Fuſtian Frock; no more than a Cambrick Bib is an Antidote againſt Lewdneſs, or an Atonement for it.

This conſecrating of Garments, and deriving Veneration from a Suit of Cloaths, is barefac'd Prieſtcraft. It is teaching the Practice of Idolatry to a Gown and Caſſock. If a little ſenſeleſs Pedant, who is a living Contradiction to Virtue and Breeding, can but whip into Orders, and cover himſelf with Crape, the firſt Thing he does is to overlook and affront all Mankind, and then demand their Reverence. His Surplice is his Citadel, and he claims the Impunity of an Ambaſſador for being graceleſs and ſaucy.

As to the common Defence which is made for their Immoralities; namely, That they are Fleſh and Blood as well as other Men, it is a wretched Piece of Sophiſtry. If they are not better than others, how are they fit to mend others? And if they cannot leave their Captivity to Sin and Satan, how come they to claim ſo near an Alliance with Heaven? If they have God's Commiſſion in their Pockets, and yet will engage in another Service, what Name and Treatment do they deſerve? We know the Fate of Rebels and Deſerters in a Lay Government. Can Men ſucceed to the Apoſtles with the Qualities and Behaviour of Apoſtates? How will they reconcile a holy Calling to infamous Lives? A Clergyman who is as bad as an ill Layman, is conſequently worſe. In that Character there is no Medium between doing Good and doing Miſchief; ſince the Influence of Example is

ſtronger

ſtronger than that of Precept. As the Doctrine and Practice of Piety, make up the Profeſſion of a Clergyman, he who deſerts Truth and Holineſs deſerts his Profeſſion, and ought to be no longer owned for a Teacher of Religion, but ſhunned and hated, as a Foe to Religion and Mankind.

The Clergy have made ſuch a terrible and inhuman Uſe of Power, in all Ages and Countries where they could come at it, that our Whig is for keeping their Nails always par'd, and their Wings clipp'd, in this Particular. Reaſon and Liberty are the Two greateſt Gifts and Bleſſings which God has given us, and yet where-ever a prieſtly Authority prevails, they muſt either fly or ſuffer. They are Enemies to the Craft, and muſt expect no Toleration. Darkneſs and Chains are the ſureſt Pillars of the ſacerdotal Empire, and it cannot ſtand without them.

Let us remember Archbiſhop *Laud*, who having got the Regal Power out of a weak Prince's Hands, into his own, ſet his Face againſt Truth, Property, Conſcience, and Liberty, and trampled them all under Foot for ſeveral Years together. A Spirit of Cruelty and Dominion govern'd this Man, and he govern'd King and People. His Heart was ſo impiouſly bent upon deſtroying Conſcience and the Conſtitution, and exalting the Prieſthood, that when any Man was oppreſſed in a paltry, tyrannical, Biſhop's Court, the Judges in *Weſtminſter-hall* durſt not obey their Oaths, and the Law, by relieving him; but were forced to be forſworn, to avoid the Anger of his *Grace*. This upſtart, plebeian Prieſt, hoped to ſee the *Time, when ne'er a Jack Gentleman in* England *would dare to ſtand before a Parſon with his Hat on.* A fine Scene truly! to ſee a Gentleman of Fortune and Breeding, ſtand ſtooping, and bare-headed, to a ſmall, ill-nurtured Vicar; who had, perhaps, formerly clean'd his Shoes, and lived upon the Crumbs that came from his Table! Let

Let us look back into former Ages, and round *Europe* at this Day, and ſee whether abject Slavery in the People is not, and always has been, the certain Conſequence of Power in the Prieſts. It cannot be denied.

I thank God I know no Power our Clergy have but that of ſuing for Tithes, and the like Privileges, which they receive from the Law alone. Thoſe Eccleſiaſticks who claim, by Divine Right, any other Power, than that of Exhortation, talk Nonſenſe, and bely the New Teſtament. To the Law, and the People who made that Law, they owe their Bread; and to ſet up for an Independency in Oppoſition to both, and pretend to a Maſterſhip over them, is arrogant, dangerous, and ought to be penal. I am told it is capital, here in *England*, for a Proteſtant to go over to the *Romiſh* Religion; and yet ſhall a Prieſt dare publickly, from the Preſs and the Pulpit, to claim, and juſtify, the moſt eſſential, and moſt formidable Principles of Popery; and thereby declare his Reconciliation with that bloody Religion, which is ſupported by Frauds, Bondage, and human Slaughter: And ſhall he for all this go unqueſtioned? This, in my Opinion, is to contend with Impunity for Uſurpation and Rebellion.

Some would ſeem to qualify theſe Pretenſions, by ſaying, That they claim a Power, but not an independent Power. Which ſeems, in this Caſe, a Sort of a Contradiction. For if it is a Power, and yet depends upon another Power, then is it, properly ſpeaking, a Juriſdiction of Subjection, and an Authority under an Authority. And while the Law and the Hierarchy are thus own'd to be Maſter and Man, we deſire no more.

Our Whig is for an unlimited Toleration of all Diſſenters whatſoever, who own the Laws and our Civil Form of Government. As to their religious Opinions, they are juſtified in them by Sincerity;

cerity; and even where that is wanting, God alone is able to judge, and alone has a Right to puniſh. In Matters of Conſcience, he who does his beſt does well, though he is miſtaken. Here all Men muſt determine for themſelves: He who follows another in this Caſe, without Enquiry, is Man's Votary, and not God's. As we have a Right to enquire into the Truth of any Religion, we have alſo a Right to leave it, if it appears falſe: But if it ſtands the Teſt of Examination, and appears true, then is our Adherence to it founded upon our own Judgment, and not upon Authority. If there be no Right of Inquiry, where is the Uſe of Perſwaſion, which implies Doubt? Or of reading the Scripture, which implies Underſtanding? We believe not a Thing 'till we think it true; and cannot believe it, if we think it falſe: And to puniſh Men for having Eyes, or having none, is equally diabolical and tyrannical.

Men diſagree daily about Matters which are ſubject to the Examination of Senſe; and is it likely that we can be all of a Mind about Things which are inviſible and diſputable? Doctors themſelves are daily cavilling; every one contradicts another, and yet all are in the right, and each demands our Faith to his particular Invention. We cannot follow all; and among equal Authorities pray which is the beſt? For the ſame Reaſon that we cannot believe every one of them, we need believe none of them, upon their own Word.

Our Whig goes farther, and thinks that all Proteſtants ought to be equally employed in a State to which they are equally well affected. The Magiſtrate has nothing to do with Speculations that purely concern another Life: Nor is it of any Conſequence to him, whether his Subjects have a greater Fondneſs for a Cloak or a Surplice: Their Affections to the political Power, and their Capacity to ſerve

ſerve it, are only to be conſulted and encouraged. Provided a Man loves Liberty and his Country, what is it to the Commonwealth whether he ſings his Prayers or ſays them? Or whether he thinks a *Biſhop* or a *Presbyter* the nearer Relation to St. *Paul*.

Theſe Two Words (*Biſhop* and *Presbyter*) ſignify, in Scripture, one and the ſame Thing, and are equally uſed to ſignify one and the ſame Officer. Our great Churchmen, indeed, have been pleaſed to think the Bible miſtaken in this Matter, and to be in the right themſelves. They have made Epiſcopacy and Presbytery as oppoſite to each other, as Paradiſe and Purgatory; and have frequently gone to cutting of Throats to prove their Point.

I muſt confeſs a Dioceſe, and a Seat in the Houſe of Lords, are unanſwerable Reaſons for the Divine Right of Epiſcopacy. There is no Way of confuting them. You may as well argue with a *Guinea*-Merchant againſt the ſelling of Slaves.

Beſides, a lordly Creature, who never preaches (Miracles having long ago ceaſed) and keeps a great Table and Equipage, and enjoys all the great and good Things of this Life, carries in all theſe Marks ſuch an Evidence of his being St. *Paul*'s right Heir, in a lineal Deſcent, that I wonder any Body *dare* doubt it.

However, as the plaineſt Things in Faith are made doubtful among Divines, who have an admirable Knack at ſtarting Difficulties, where no Body elſe would expect them; our Whig is of Opinion, that the Teacher who walks on Foot, has as good a Title to diſpute about Religion, and maintain his own, as the Right Reverend Doctor, who ſupports his Orthodoxy with a Coach and Six; and ſhould be as much encouraged by the Civil Magiſtrate, if his Principles and Behaviour ſquare with the Conſtitution. Is a Man a better Neighbour,

or Subject, for nodding to a Table, at the upper End of a Chancel, or for pronouncing his Faith towards the East? Our Churchmen may find good Cause to enjoin these *necessary Things*, which the Scripture had forgot, and enjoy great Benefit and Obedience from the Practice of them; but in temporal Matters, I am not fully convinced that they make a Man's Head wiser, or his Heart honester.

I cannot here omit taking Notice of an old fallacious Cry, which has long rung in our Ears; namely, that of *No Bishop, no King*. This solid Argument was used, with Royal Success, by *King* James *the first*, when he sat Deputy for the Clergy, and disputed with the Puritans, at the Conference at *Hampton-Court*. It was, indeed, the best he could use; however he strengthned, and embellished it, with several imperial Oaths, which he swore on that Occasion, to the utter Confusion of his Antagonists, and the great Triumph of the *genuine Clergy* and the Archbishop; who bestow'd the Holy Ghost upon his Majesty, for his Zeal and Swearing on the Church's Side.

This stupid *Saying* has formerly filled our Prisons with Dissenters, and chased many of them to *America*; and by this Means weakened the Kingdom and the Protestant Religion, to keep up good Neighbourhood between the Bishops and the Prince. But they were neither the Bishops, nor their Creatures, that restored *King* Charles *the second*, but a Set of true blue Presbyterians, who were rewarded for it with Gaols, Fines, and *Silent Sabbaths*.

Loyalty is not confined to the Mitre. Bishops have given more Disturbance, and occasioned more Distresses to Prince and People, than any other Sort of Men upon Earth. This I can prove. Our own Bishops, for near an hundred Years before the Revolution, were in every Scheme for promoting Tyranny and Bondage. On the other Hand, our Dissenters

Diſſenters were ever eminent Oppoſers of Arbitrary Power, and always lived peaceably under thoſe Princes who uſed them like Subjects. If they took up Arms when they were oppreſſed, Churchmen have done the ſame, and often without that Cauſe.

Had it not been for Diſſenters, I queſtion whether we ſhould now have had either this Conſtitution, this King, or this Religion. It is well known that a great Majority of our Churchmen have got *Claims* and *Principles* utterly irreconcileable to either. The moſt miſchievous Tenets of Popery are adopted and maintained, and the Ground upon which our Security and Succeſſion ſtand, is boldly undermined. It is dreadful, and incredible what a Reprobate Spirit reigns amongſt the High Clergy.

The Convocation have fallen fiercely upon thoſe who have fallen upon Popery and Jacobitiſm. And what a Popiſh, Impious and Rebellious Spirit reigns at *Oxford*, they themſelves ſave me the Trouble of declaring. Diſaffection is promoted; open and black Perjury is juſtified; and it is held lawful to defy Almighty Vengeance for a Morſel of Bread. A Man's Conſcience is tried by an Oath, and he that can ſwallow any has none.

But it is not enough to ſhipwreck their Souls for their Livings, nor to keep this helliſh Corruption at Home. As they practiſe ſo they teach, and the ſpreading of their own Guilt, and the making others as bad as themſelves (if Laymen can be ſo) is made the Duty of their Functions, and the Buſineſs of their Lives. Can Antichriſt do worſe? And are theſe Men who walk in the Paths of Atheiſm and Perdition, fit to lead others to Holineſs and Eternal Life?

One of the greateſt Men of the laſt Age told King WILLIAM, That the Univerſities, if they continued upon the preſent Foot, would deſtroy Him, or the Nation, or ſome of His Succeſſors. And

they have ever ſince been endeavouring to make good his Words. That Prince was ſo thoroughly apprized of the dangerous Genius and Principles of theſe two Bodies of Men, that he intended a Regulation, but, as it is ſaid, was prevented by the pernicious Advice of the late Duke of *S*———, who had at that Time gained the King's Confidence, and was at the Head of the Whigs, but was betraying both, and making a Party with the Tories, as afterwards plainly enough appeared.

How far, and how faſt, theſe Seminaries have ſince then corrupted and inflamed the People, every Body knows, and the Nation feels. Had it not been for them we ſhould have lighter Taxes and fewer Soldiers.

Upon the Coming in of His preſent Majeſty, we thought we had a Right to expect ſuch Meaſures of Government as would not only ſecure Us for the Time being, but prevent a Relapſe into the Dangers out of which Providence had juſt plucked Us by the Death of ——— It is certain that the King brought along with Him, and ſtill preſerves a Diſpoſition to do Us all the Good which we can propoſe or deſire.

All thoſe Whigs therefore who had no ſecret Ends to ſerve by dark Dealings with the Tories, nor private Fortunes to raiſe by neglecting or perplexing the Publick, inſiſted upon the Puniſhment of thoſe who had bargained away the Nation, and upon a Viſitation of the Univerſities, and both were undertaken and promiſed. But why neither was done, they who are concerned can beſt tell, if telling was proper. In the mean Time they cannot blame us for gueſſing.

I am only ſorry that the great and ſurprizing Tenderneſs, which ſome have ſhewn for the High Clergy, has not been able to produce one Inſtance of Loyalty or Moderation. Perhaps the Prieſthood will

will accept of no Alliance without a total Alteration; and that the Adoption of two or three eminent Perſons of their Faction into Partnerſhip with ſome other eminent Perſons, pretending to be of a different Faction, will not do.

However that be, the Univerſities ſeem to dread no ſuch Thing as a Viſitation. Whether they have Aſſurances given them, or whether they take their Conjectures from our other Meaſures for Reformation, I cannot ſay.

The ſame Spirit which leads us to leſſen our Taxes and clear the Publick, and to enlarge the Bottom of Liberty and the Proteſtant Faith by unyoking of Diſſenters, will carry us alſo to remove the Corruption of our Seminaries, and their diſaffected Spawn in too many Pariſhes. But when ſuch a Spirit will ariſe, we are not able to foretel. We have been already long deluded with many Prophecies and Promiſes of that Kind, which, as poſitive as they were, and as probable as they appeared, have never been fulfilled. We have been even tired with hoping and believing, and now Deſpair and Infidelity have ſucceeded, and are like to laſt as long as their Cauſes laſt.

Our Liberties, in the mean Time, lye exceeding precarious. The High Clergy have ſtill the ſame Engines to play againſt them, which in Time paſt have gone very near utterly to overturn them. Their Divine Right is preſerved as the Apple of their Eye; a blind Belief in *them* is inculcated with all their might; and a blind Obedience to any Royal Idol, who will purchaſe their Flattery by worſhipping them, is at all Times the Burden of their Harangues. As to this laſt Article, we are, I thank God, very ſafe at preſent; but the *preſent* will not be always.

I could here wonder, for two or three Pages, at the marvellous Strength of Nonſenſe, and the pitiful

Weak-

Weakneſs of Human Minds, who by the Perſwaſion of Falſhood and Contradiction can grow zealous for their own Bonds and Wretchedneſs. And yet is it not ſo in moſt Countries, where People are miſerable by the Advice of their Prieſts to pleaſe a Tyrant?

There are Bounds ſet to the Power of our Princes by the ſame Laws which made them Princes. An *Engliſh* King is limited as well, though not as much as a *Dutch* Stadtholder, and for the ſame Reaſon. The difference of Names alters not the Caſe. Would a *Dutch* Prieſt dare, in that free Country, to tell the People, that they ought to be Slaves to an Officer of their own making, and yet go without a Whipping, or a Diſmiſſion, or ſomething ſtill worſe? Is it High Treaſon to aſſert that a King has no Title, and ought to be depoſed? And is it no Crime to argue and maintain that the People are Slaves, and their Lives and Property at the Mercy of one whom they created, and whoſe Duty it is, to defend thoſe Lives and that Property?

It is true, too many of the High Clergy never once practiſe this Doctrine themſelves, and never encourage it in others but for profitable Purpoſes. But ſuch is their want of Shame, that they never quit it, and yet never obſerve it. They preach againſt Rebellion, and practiſe Rebellion, juſt as they are pleaſed or out of Humour.

Our Whig ſees with Pain and Fear the dangerous Condition of our Debts and Taxes. They are a heavy and melancholy Load upon the Nation, and will be ſo, till it pleaſes God to raiſe up proper Hands to relieve us, and who will ſet about it while it is yet practicable, before more new Wars have puzled and encreaſed our Accounts beyond a poſſibility of clearing them. They are at preſent a Canker in the Hearts of many People, and create numerous Foes, whom we in vain ſtrive to terrify

or

or reconcile, if we do not leſſen their Burdens.

From hence the Enemies of our Peace and Liberty take Pretence, and find ample Materials, for ſowing Diſaffection; and we in vain confront, or contradict them. If we are asked, when we ſhall have done *fighting* and *taxing?* we either know not what to anſwer, or if we name a Time for their ending, at leaſt for their beginning to end, they will not take our Word.

With the Cure of publick Evils Diſaffection will be cured alſo. All Men, therefore, who are Friends to the King, or the Nation, will labour this Happineſs; will avoid entring into all Wars which are not abſolutely neceſſary to the publick Security, and will take every Opportunity to end thoſe which are ſo, upon honourable Terms: And by this Teſt let them be tried: We have before our Eyes a pregnant Inſtance in *France* (and, I doubt, a dangerous one too for its Neighbours) where an almoſt univerſal Diſaffection is changed into as univerſal a Love to the Adminiſtration, upon the Appearance of its acting for the publick Good.

We have ſo good a Prince, that let our Debts be ever ſo high and embaraſſed, we have no Reaſon to fear a Sponge, or a Standing Army, to clear the Kingdom of its Mortgages, though it could be done no other Way: And in his Goodneſs is our greateſt Hope. There are many good Subjects who terrify themſelves with ſuch Imaginations, which, indeed, are truly terrible, were they well grounded. But his Majeſty's Virtue, and the importunate Call of the Nation, will, no doubt, be too hard, at laſt, for any ill Management or worſe Deſigns of any, who may find their Account in dabling in publick Misfortunes; and who, whilſt they think they tread upon a Worm, may rouſe a Lion.

Let us remember the ſad Fate of *Sweden* and *Denmark*. They run into Debts by running into Wars, and

and the Court took the Advantage of their Neceſſities to ſeize their Liberties. They grew Slaves by growing inſolvent. Under his Majeſty's Reign we fear no ſuch Thing; and, I hope, we ſhall ſcorn to ſuffer it under any other. Beſides, as we are told a Remedy is intended, I doubt not but we ſhall ſee it the enſuing Seſſions, when our Burdens will be eaſed, and our Difficulties removed. There is a noble Fund of Wealth in the Nation, and we are yet redeemable, if proper Perſons offer to undertake it.

Our Whig is a declared Enemy to all Wars, if they are not abſolutely neceſſary. Though he honours a Soldier as he does a Phyſician, yet he prays to God that he may never have Occaſion for either. Arbitrary Courts abroad, are, for the moſt Part, compoſed of Officers of the Army; and our Whig has ſo great a Weakneſs about him, that he cannot, without very uneaſy Images, ſee a Glare of Scarlet where he would leaſt wiſh it. He would not have the Men of the Sword grow familiar to the Eyes of the People, nor become the Equipage of our *Britiſh* Kings.

Military Men are a proper Equipage for thoſe Princes who are Fathers of their People againſt their Will; who lay the Foundations of Juſtice in Fear and Blood, and uſe the Sword as the moſt natural Means to ſupport thoſe Foundations. In Countries that are enſlav'd, the Sword is the Civil Magiſtrate: That it is not ours is almoſt a Wonder, conſidering the Diſpoſition in many of our former Princes to Armies. Our Kings of the *Norman* Race were perpetually raiſing *Engliſh* Forces for the Preſervation of their *French* Dominions, and engaging us in eternal Wars on that Score. The Army that enſlaved *Sweden* was raiſed for the Defence and Enlargement of their *German* Provinces, which were always a Burden to that Kingdom, and, at length, its utter Ruin.

We

We do not at preſent ſee in *Great Britain* many more Forces than are neceſſary to the Civil Liſt; and I hope in proper Time there will not be one more. They furniſh another Topick for Clamour to the diſaffected, who raiſe Rebellions, and when they have given Occaſion for more Soldiers and more Taxes, cry out, *Oppreſſion! Oppreſſion!* Sure theſe People are mad; they dread the Power of the Court, and yet are every Day helping it to more.

If a right Uſe had been made of the late Rebellion, we might have had now no new ones to fear. But, for whatever Reaſons I will not pretend to gueſs, the Surgeons of that Time were ſo exceeding gentle in their Operations, that they left a Core in the Wound. Without doubt the Motives for Clemency were irreſiſtible.

I muſt here acquit His Majeſty from the Imputation of any Fondneſs for a Standing Army. I dare ſay the Propoſal to Disband our Forces after the Rebellion, met with no delay from *Him*; and I have been told that he lately refuſed a very importunate Requeſt to increaſe His Troops. I muſt alſo do Juſtice to the Gentlemen of the Army for having ſo well done their Duty. If our High Clergy were but equally faithful to their Oaths, and equally Friends to their Country, we ſhould have ſeen neither new Troops nor Rebellions. The Army has ſav'd us from the High Church. But for all that I have ſaid, I ſhould be ſorry to ſee the People of *England* either love or fear a ſtanding Force: To do either infers Danger.

I doubt not but when his Majeſty ſhall think fit to Disband more Troops, his Miniſtry will act with Alacrity and without Art: Becauſe the diſmiſſing of ſome common Soldiers *only*, after much Expectation from one Party, and more Noiſe from another, will be ſubject to unkind Interpretations.

I hope the Power of Quartering Soldiers is always impartially executed, and that no Conſideration is of any Force on this Occaſion, but that of the publick Security, and the Loyalty or Diſloyalty of the Towns. I am perſwaded we ſhall never hereafter ſee a Regiment removed out of a Town avowedly diſaffected, into another which does not want Dragoons to keep it quiet, purely becauſe the commanding Officer has it in his Eye to ſtand Candidate for that Town, if ever there ſhould be another Occaſion; as I am informed has been practiſed in former Reigns.

Our Whig was well enough pleaſed with our Attack upon the *Spaniſh* Fleet. It became us, as Sovereigns of the Sea, to pull down betimes the riſing Maritime Power of *Spain*, and thereby ſecure our Dignity and Trade. But whether the Blow was well purſued, I am not a proper Judge. I ſhall only ſay, for the Honour of *Great Britain*, that w-are certainly the beſt *Allies* in the whole World, and have the moſt civil way of fighting our Neighboure Battles for them.

It is a very uncommon, though perhaps a neceſſary Kindneſs, to employ at an immenſe Expence the Royal Navy of *England* as Tranſports for the Emperor's Troops, and to cruiſe about a Country at ſuch a diſtance from us, and for ſo long a Time together. I doubt not but there will be very good Reaſons given for it, if the Parliament ſhall ever think fit to call for them.

I muſt here do our Superiours the Juſtice to own, that they take effectual and ſpeedy Methods to finiſh the *Spaniſh* War. For notwithſtanding that we had a great Fleet in the *Streights*, and another in the *Baltick*, a Third was diſpatched with much Reſolution and Expence to frighten the Cardinal into pacifick Meaſures, and to conquer *Vigo*, tho' we were threaten'd at the ſame Time at Home with a dread-

ful

ful Invaſion from the late Duke of *Ormond*. But no domeſtick Danger can hinder a brave People from exerting their martial Genius, and making a heroick Figure abroad.

In this *Vigo* Expedition it is ſaid we have had wonderful Succeſs. For, not to mention that the Town would infallibly have been plundered, had not the Inhabitants gutted their Houſes when they run away, it is certain that we have vanquiſhed ſeveral great Guns and brought them away Captives. It is alſo credibly reported that we have taken from the Enemy ſome of their Fiſhing Tackle.

Our Whig allows Great Men to have their private Failings and Paſſions. It cannot be otherwiſe; and they are unreaſonable and ill bred who upbraid them with it. But in the Name of God let them not indulge them at the Expence of the Nation. Let them not poſtpone the Care of the publick Welfare to mind their own. Let them not out of perſonal Piques give up Whig Boroughs into Jacobite Hands. Let them not for the ſake of a Miſtreſs or a Crony diſable worthy Men, and patroniſe worthleſs. Let them not run into mad Dangers, and then endeavour to alter and confound the Conſtitution for their perſonal Security from thoſe Dangers. Let them not out of Self-ends, and for ſecret (perhaps pernicious Jobs) be tampering and jugling with the Nation's Enemies, and deſerting and betraying that Party which is eminent for its Love of Liberty, to thoſe who are its ſtigmatized Enemies.

The Duke of *Buckingham*, chief Miniſter to the bleſſed Martyr, involved his Country in two Wars at a Time, when the Exchequer was empty, with the two great neighbouring Kingdoms, becauſe he was balked in his luſtful Deſigns upon a *French* Lady and a *Spaniſh*. And the Duke of *Lauderdale*, becauſe he was diſobliged by the Kirk, a Member of which he once was, ruled his native Kingdom of *Scotland*

by a great Army and ſanguinary Laws, all the Reign of King *Charles* the Second.

I cannot forbear digreſſing a little here, to ſhew the wretched State of *Scotland* at that Time. High Church, which by Force and Cruelty had expelled Presbytery, enjoyed then a rare Time of revelling in the Blood of Schiſmaticks. The Orthodox Prieſts became every where Informers againſt the Preaching and Praying of Nonconformiſts, and the Soldiers, to pleaſe the Prieſts, became their Butchers. And the poor religious People, when caught provoking the Clergy by Devotion, were unmercifully put to Death without Law, Jury, or Record. So were thoſe Men rewarded, who had received and crowned that King, when his Life was ſought by thoſe who took away his Father's.

But to return. I can prove it, that the whole Legiſlative Power of this Nation has been in former Reigns engaged in gratifying a diabolical Paſſion of one Man; and our Security and Liberties have been ſacrificed to Humour or a Miſtreſs. When a Miniſter makes haſte to be rich, the Service of his Country muſt either lye ſtill, or go on no faſter than he gets by it. A whole People was finely employed when they were labouring for the Pocket of one who was betraying them at the ſame Time. Moſt Men are willing to allow a great Officer, if he would but carefully cook the Nation's Money, to lick his own Fingers and thrive upon his Employment. But he who exhauſts the Nation for his own Uſe, is a publick Highwayman, and the whole Kingdom ſhould be his Proſecutors. I do not believe that there are any ſuch Practices at preſent —— I pray God defend us from them for the future. That ſuch Things may be ſafely done, is evident from hence, that of all the overgrown Leeches of the laſt Reigns (for I ſuppoſe there have been none in this) not one has been yet drained of his ill got Wealth.

Gaming

Gaming is ſo dreadful a Vice, eſpecially in thoſe who are any way intruſted with our Liberties, that I cannot paſs over it in ſilence.

A Man who will venture his Eſtate will venture his Country. He who is mad enough to commit his All to the Chance of a Dye, is like to prove but a faithleſs Guardian of the Publick, in which he has perhaps no longer any Stake. It is a Jeſt, and ſomething worſe in a Man who flings away his Fortune this way, to pretend any Regard for the good of Mankind. His Actions give his Words the Lie. He ſacrifices his own Happineſs, and that of his Family and Poſterity, to a Sharper or an Amuſement, and by doing it ſhews that he is utterly deſtitute of common Prudence and natural Affection; and on the contrary, an Encourager and Example of the moſt deſtructive Corruption; and after all this ridiculouſly talks of his Zeal for his Country, which conſiſts in good Senſe and Virtue joined to a Tenderneſs for one's Fellow Creatures. When he has wantonly reduced himſelf to a Morſel of Bread, he will be eaſily perſwaded to forſake his Wretchedneſs and accept of a Bribe. Who would truſt their Property with one who cannot keep his own? The ſame vicious Imbecility of Mind which makes a Man a Fool to himſelf, will make him a Knave to other People. So that this wicked pronenes to play, which is only the impious Art of undoing and being undone, cuts off every Man who is poſſeſſed with it, from all pretence either to Honeſty or Capacity. I doubt *England* has paid dear for ſuch Extravagancies. A Law-maker and a Gameſter, is a Character big with Abſurdity and Danger. I wiſh that in every Member of either Houſe Gaming were attended with Expulſion and Degradation; and, in every Officer Civil or Military, with the Loſs of his Place. A Law enjoining this Penalty would be effectual, and no other can. We ſee it goes on, upon the preſent Foot, in ſpight

of

of Satyr and Acts of Parliament. I would have this execrable Corruption meet with no Encouragement. The Frowns of the Court would certainly put a check to it, but then there muſt not be an Office kept on purpoſe for it.

Our Whig has an equal Averſion to Maſquerades. They are a Market for Maidenheads and Adultery; a dangerous Luxury oppoſite to Virtue and Liberty. There was ſomething like them formerly in the Reigns of our worſt Princes, by the Name of *Masks*. As the preſent Reign reſembles theſe in nothing elſe, ſo neither would I have it reſemble them in this. They were revived, or rather introduced, after the *French way* by a *Foreign Ambaſſador*, whoſe only Errand then in *England* could be but to corrupt and enſlave us, and for that End this mad and indecent Diverſion was practis'd and exhibited by him as a popular Engine to catch looſe Minds, or to make them ſo, with great Succeſs. What good Purpoſe they can ſerve now, I would be glad to know? —— The Miſchief of them is manifeſt both to the Publick, and private Perſons; a Handle is taken from them to traduce ſome great Characters, whom I would have always reverenced; and they are viſibly an Opportunity and Invitation to Lewdneſs.

If People will have Amuſements, let them have warrantable and decent ones; as to Maſquerades, they are ſo much the School of Vice, that excepting a Law to declare it innocent and ſafe, I queſtion whether Human Invention can contrive a more ſucceſsful Method of propagating it.

The Practice of the Commonalty is formed upon the Example of the Great, and what the latter *do* the former think they *may do*. If a City Wife has it in her Head, againſt her Husband's Inclinations, to take the *Pleaſures* of the Maſquerade, ſhe has but to tell him that my Lady Dutcheſs of ———— is to be there (no doubt upon the ſame Errand) and the poor,

poor, ſober, ſaving Man muſt ſubmit, and be *content* to be in the *Claſs* of his *Betters*.

From this Source of Proſtitution I fear many a worthy Man takes to his Arms a tainted and vicious Wife, and finds in her a melancholy Reaſon both for himſelf and his Poſterity to curſe and deteſt Maſquerades, and all thoſe that encouraged them. I was in hopes they were at an end. I heard that the Theatre in the *Hay Market* was to be uſed intirely another way, and that our Underſtandings were only to be affronted this Winter in that Place with *Italian* Quavers and *Cremona* Fiddles; for which I was not ſorry, ſince the leaving of Debauchery for the ſake of Nonſenſe, is ſtill ſome degree of Reformation. Let us make much of it —— Though I would feign hope it is not the only one we are like to ſee.

Some weak People would inſinuate, as if thoſe in high Place promoted theſe infamous Amuſements as a Means to divert buſy Heads from diving into their Actions —— But this muſt be a malicious and ſenſleſs Slander, ſince all the Meaſures of theſe Gentlemen are ſo clear and honourable that they themſelves need fear no Scrutiny.

Having neither Wife nor Daughter of my own, I am anxious only for the Eaſe and Reputation of thoſe that have. So that I have no Motive but the Love of publick Virtue to ſay what I have ſaid upon this Theme.

I could wiſh that thoſe Reverend Gentlemen, whoſe Buſineſs and Duty it more properly is, to expoſe this Scene of Iniquity, had prevented me. If our Lent Preachers have omitted it, I can aſcribe it to nothing but Forgetfulneſs, or *their good Breeding*. And yet where is there a more neceſſary, where a more affecting Subject? Here, O ye Biſhops, Prieſts and Deacons, ſhew the *Zeal* with which you abound; here ſhew *Danger*, not to the Church

Church indeed, but *Danger* to Virtue, *Danger* to Chriſtianity! Here alarm your Peoples Ears, here rouſe their Paſſions; and ceaſe combating *harmleſs Notions* and *dry Ideas*, till you have utterly defeated glaring Vice and exorbitant Debauchery.

Our Whig is an irreconcilable Enemy to the ſelling of Places, or conferring them partially. *To be given to the Worthieſt*, is the publick Voice upon this Occaſion. They are the national Rewards for well deſerving, or a Capacity of deſerving well; and it is evident Injuſtice, and a kind of Robbery, to diſpoſe of them upon other Motives. If the Candidate has Merit, the tacit Conſent of the People is already on his Side; and why ſhould he give Money for that which is his due? If he has not Merit, why ſhould he have the Recompence of it? *Freely you have received, freely give*, is a Precept which has Reaſon as well as Inſpiration to recommend and enforce it.

Moſt or all of the great Places are given Gratis to thoſe who, as to their Fortunes, do not want them, and no Cauſe can be aſſigned but Avarice and want of Human Compaſſion why any of the ſmall ones ſhould be ſold, when they are ſought for the moſt part as the Means of Life and Subſiſtence.

He that can bargain away a little Poſt, would from the ſame vile Principle diſpoſe of a great Kingdom upon valuable Conſiderations; and ſooner, as the Price muſt be greater, and conſequently the Motives ſtronger.

Every Guilt of this kind, when detected, ſhould be branded with Incapacity and a publick Mark of Infamy. It is making Traffick of one's Country: It is plundering Worth of its Birthright; and it has a degree of Malignity and Vileneſs in it, which ought to be narrowly watched and ſeverely puniſhed. It is true this Villany cannot be always detected openly; but by obſerving Mens Circumſtances we may gueſs whether they ſpend or lay up more than their

honeſt

honeſt Income; and if they do, we may take them for Criminals, and either oblige them to account for theſe Exceedings, or diſable them from hurting us any more in the ſame Station.

In King *Charles* the Second's Time, a *French* Woman or two, and a Tribe of other hungry Courtiers who came with him from beyond Sea, did by the Connivance of the Miniſtry, and in Confederacy with them, make a fair Penny of the Birthright of *Britons*. The Parliament of that Time, who ſhould have been the Guardians and Watchmen of the Publick, were themſelves engaged in a Trade of Corruption, and ſpoke, or held their Tongues, as they were paid. In that Long Parliament there was a Majority of Penſioners, who overlooked theſe dark Dealings, and many more, particularly that of the arbitrary Encreaſe of the Prince's Guards, which was the firſt Approach towards a ſtanding Army. Theſe Guards have never been reduced ſince. This ſhews the dreadful Danger of Precedents.

But neither ought Places to be beſtowed out of private and perſonal Regards. I have heard of the Time, when a mean obſcure Jacobite, was put into a fine Poſt for Life, purely for a piece of Work which deſerved no more than an Attorney's Fee. Beſides, the Publick had no concern in it. When, at the ſame Time, very many deſerving Whigs remain'd unprovided for, and even neglected, though they had done their Country more Service than ſome who had much better luck.

There were a Sort of Men amongſt us many Years ſince, who being of great Conſequence to themſelves, had adopted the Craft of Churchmen, and very ſolemnly aſſured us that the Nation was always in eminent Danger when they were not in Place. But as ſoon as the Steerage was committed

to them, and they were got into a way of thriving, all was ſafe and yet nothing altered. It was of no Moment how other Poſts were conferred, provided *they* enjoyed the *greateſt*, and the Power of giving the ſmaller. If a Pretender was worth Money, or had done a *private* Job, no matter for his Parts and Principles; *Worthleſſneſs* and *Jacobitiſm* were no Bars to Preferment; nay, the *Tories* were invited to accept of very good Places and welcome, provided they aimed not at the *higheſt of all*. But for the Whigs of the private and inferiour Claſs, they were at Liberty to do what Good they pleaſed to their Country and to Mankind, without the leaſt Pretenſions to the Friendſhip of the *Great*: On the contrary, they were told they very arrogantly diſobliged them, and marred their Schemes by their officious Behaviour.

I am perſwaded it is otherwiſe now, and that in due Time we ſhall ſee the *Biſhop of Bangor* preferred ſuitably to his great Merit. I hope it is not inconſiſtent with any Schemes. I am ſure the Intereſts of Truth and Liberty are nearly concerned in it. For my part, I ſhould not wonder if both Houſes of Parliament addreſſed his Majeſty to give his Lordſhip the beſt Biſhoprick in *England*, as he is the beſt Defender of the Liberties of *England*.

I hope it is not true what I am told, namely, That the Biſhop has not only met with hard Uſage and Diſappointment, but even hard Names, from ſome People, for his keeping up a Spirit which hindered the Adoption of ſome true Sons of the Church into certain Schemes.

Let me alone and I will let you alone, is no longer the Language of Children at play. A much wiſer Sort of People have taken it up, and it appears to be the firſt Article of a certain *Bargain*, which all laſt Winter we were put in Hopes of.

If

If ſuch People could have their will, the Seminaries and their Miſſionaries might go on to ſcatter their Poiſon, and level their Doctrines againſt the fundamental Security of this Nation; to ſtrike at the Root of our Peace; to over-bear the moſt glaring Truths with bold and dangerous Falſhoods, and to have it in their Power to make us miſerable Bondmen whenever they have a fair Opportunity. Then not a Stroak muſt be ſtruck that may diſpleaſe or diſappoint them; not a Corruption be removed that they are fond of; not a Clergyman rewarded, nor any Body elſe, who has writ in Defence of Liberty, and made them angry.

But Almighty God has been ſo merciful to this poor Nation, as to bleſs us with a Miniſtry, who, ſcorning all mean Tranſactions, will alſo ſcorn to enter into any Meaſures of Union and Confederacy with the High Clergy, till the whole Body of them have given us *demonſtrative Proofs* of their Attachment to our *preſent Settlement* and *Civil Rights*; but will, on the contrary, enable the Diſſenters, in the mean Time, to defend us and themſelves againſt any future Attempts to diſturb and enſlave us.

While His Majeſty reigns, let Him have what Counſellors He will, our Liberties will be ſecure. His very Perſon and Countenance ſhew Him to be a virtuous, wiſe, and beneficent Prince, and every Action of His Life confirms it. But will He live for ever? And can we forget our many Struggles with the High Clergy for the Preſervation of our Liberty? Are not theſe Men, whom we ſet up and maintain, for ever endeavouring to pull us down, and to make a Prey of our Property, and Slaves of our Perſons? Do they not claim our Lands for their Poſſeſſions, and us for their Vaſſals? Have we not been forced to wage War with our own Mercenaries?

May we not therefore expect during His Majesty's Reign Security against the Time to come? Have we not been promised it? And will any Body dare to affirm that he refuses it? No, no. I wish others were as ready to ask as he will be to comply. His first and chief Care, the Nation's Happiness, is concerned in it; and the Nation's principal Care, the Security of His Person and Family, is also concerned in it: And they who oppose or neglect it, oppose and neglect both.

The Dissenters have undeniably proved themselves excellent Subjects and *Englishmen*; and it will always be their Interest to do so, while they have that Protection and Encouragement, which God and Nature, and our Constitution allow them. They aim at no Independent Power. They have no Pretensions upon the Lands and Liberties of *England*. They have to a Man kept their Oaths to the Government, and opposed the Rebellion. They are a sober and industrious People, and Promoters of Morality and Trade, two great Props of Liberty. And the highest Objection against them is, That they will not kneel down to a Priest, nor worship a piece of Crape. Yet they still stand where they did, and are like to stand; for it seems there are many Asseverations and Oaths gone forth against them, *That the Dissenters shall rise no higher.*

It is fit the Dissenters should know that they deserve, in every Respect, the best Usage the Nation can give them; and the honest part of the Nation, to do it Justice, is not to blame if they want it.

Every Government stands by confiding in those that love it. The present Ministry owe their Being so to their Principles of Liberty, and their Adherence

rence to the Succeſſion. And is it not equally reaſonable that the Diſſenters, who have the ſame Plea, ſhould poſſeſs in a proper Degree the ſame Favour? And yet have they any other Reward than Two or Three meer Negatives? They contributed largely to ſave the Nation, and *therefore they are not perſecuted.* Exceeding kind and bountiful!

Their Zeal and Induſtry, to ſay nothing of their Expences, in chuſing Proteſtant Members for the preſent Parliament, will, I don't doubt, be powerful Motives with grateful Men to relieve theſe their Friends and Benefactors from the Fetters of Teſts which were intended againſt Papiſts. And the remarkable Spirit and Alacrity which they ſhewed in quelling the late Rebellion, tho' at the Danger of Penalties and Proſecutions, was likewiſe a loud Demand upon thoſe who could take their Thoughts off themſelves, and turn them to the publick Intereſt, to diſtinguiſh with Qualifications and Rewards ſuch a numerous Body of well affected Men.

That ſuch a publick Spirited Deſign could not have been carried through, will hardly be believed. Projects of a very different and inferiour Nature have been attended with ſurprizing Succeſs. And not one Bill, or Scheme, that had the leaſt Face of publick Good, has miſcarried. No; we have been triumphant in our Undertakings in the Houſe of Commons: Inſomuch that it is hard to determine which is more remarkable, the Zeal of that Houſe for the Eaſe and Intereſt of the Publick, or its commendable Faith in the Miniſtry.

A certain Project indeed was very juſtly, and very fortunately for *Great Britain*, received by all *diſintereſted Perſons* with a general Abhorrence. What muſt ſome Men have done, when nothing

nothing can ſcreen them but the altering and overturning of Foundations?

But to return, and put the Behaviour of High Church in Ballance with that of the Diſſenters. The corrupt Clergy were through all *England* puſhing at our Settlement with all their Might and Malice. Some of them indeed were wary and ſilent, but their good Will was never the leſs. So true is it, that *they who are not for us, are againſt us*? Even in their Neutrality they were forſworn. Thus the Ambaſſadors of Peace and Truth, and the great Advocates for Non-Reſiſtance, became the Trumpeters of War, and the Patrons of Perjury and Rebellion.

If the Diſſenters knew what Bargains are driven, and with what Contempt they are ſpoken of, and what a mortal Antipathy there is in ſome People againſt giving them any ſubſtantial Advantages, they would not be ſo very free in drinking certain Healths, which are now, for good Cauſes, omitted by their trueſt Patrons in Town. But I am told they themſelves begin to be pretty well cured of their wonted Fondneſs that way. God knows, they have ſufficient Reaſon. Mr. *W*—— was once their great Favourite: They ſee how he ſerved them. Have they found others much kinder? I wiſh that even their profeſſed *Plenipo's*, who loſe nothing by being at the Head of their Affairs, do not now and then drop their Zeal for *Separation*, in Conſideration of a Bank Bill, or a pretty Income. It is certain they go every length; whether conſiſtently with their Commiſſion, let their Principals judge.

There has been lately a Motion made in the *Iriſh* Parliament, in favour of Proteſtant Diſſenters in that Kingdom. I will not ſuppoſe they are beholding for this Favour to the Author of the

the Letter to the Archbiſhop of *Canterbury*; but of this I dare be poſitive, That if ſome People have half as much Zeal for paſſing ſuch a Bill in *Ireland*, as they had, and, I am told, ſtill have, for paſſing another in *England*, it will not hereafter miſcarry.

P. S. In the Second Part of this Character will be conſidered the Affair of a Northern War.

F I N I S.